

Washington, DC - Tuesday, Congressman Harry Teague announced that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is awarding \$180,750 to the Mesilla Valley Community of Hope. The Mesilla Valley Community of Hope will use the funding to provide 22 beds for homeless veterans in the area as well as a van to assist with transportation.

“It is shameful that the men and women who have served our country in uniform would have to spend one night on the street,” said Congressman Harry Teague , a member of the House Veterans Affairs Committee. “This grant funding goes straight to our local communities to provide relief for our veterans who need it most.”

Congressman Teague has introduced legislation aimed at reducing the number of homeless veterans across the country. H.R. 2504 would increase funding for veterans transitional facilities that help veterans find employment and secure their own housing. The New Mexico Department of Veterans Services (NMDVS) estimates that there are between 660 and 7,000 homeless veterans in the state.

The VA announced today that 19 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico will share more than \$17 million in grants to community groups to create 1,155 beds for homeless Veterans this year.

“These grants will aid our efforts to eliminate homelessness among those who have served in uniform,” said Secretary Shinseki. “Our partnerships with community-based organizations provide safe, transitional housing while these Veterans leverage VA’s health care and other benefits to return to productive lives.”

A key tool in VA’s drive to eliminate homelessness among Veterans, the grants helped VA reduce the number of Veterans who are homeless on a typical night last year by 15% to about 131,000 Veterans.

More information about NMDVS’s homeless program is available here: <http://www.dvs.state.nm.us/nmvic.html>